

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-43 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 18, 22, 23, 25, 27 and 28 are amended. Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 9-15 and 29-43.

An Information Disclosure Statement was filed on September 25, 2003 and December 6, 2005 and with this Amendment. It is requested that the Examiner consider the references in those Information Disclosure Statements and return initialed Forms PTO-1449 to Applicants' representative.

Claims 1-5 and 16-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kashiwase, U.S. Patent No. 6,146,302, in view of Frank, U.S. Patent No. 5,842,534. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Kashiwase and Frank fail to disclose or suggest a hybrid drive system with a third rotation element that is not operatively linked with an output portion via a transmission, as recited in claim 1, and as similarly recited in independent claims 22, 23 and 25.

Kashiwase discloses a hybrid motor vehicle with a transmission 5 located between the carrier 3b (identified as the third element in the Office Action) of the planetary gear 3 and the axle 8 (identified as the output portion in the Office Action). Kashiwase thus fails to disclose all of the features recited in claims 1, 22, 23 and 25 because the carrier 3b is operatively linked with the axle 8 via the transmission 5.

Frank fails to overcome the deficiencies of Kashiwase because Frank fails to disclose a planetary gear with a third rotation element.

Kashiwase and Frank also fail to disclose or suggest a vehicle where a drive power of an internal combustion engine, which is distributed through a power distribution planetary gear, is outputted to an output portion but not via a transmission, as recited in claim 18 and as similarly recited in claims 27 and 28.

As discussed above, Kashiwase's transmission 5 is located between the engine 1 and the axle 8 (identified as the output portion in the Office Action). Kashiwase thus fails to disclose all of the features recited in claims 18, 27 and 28 because a drive power of the engine 1 is outputted to the axle 8 via the transmission 5.

Frank fails to overcome the deficiencies of Kashiwase because Frank also discloses a transmission 18 between the engine 14 and the shaft 20 (identified as the output portion in the Office Action).

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

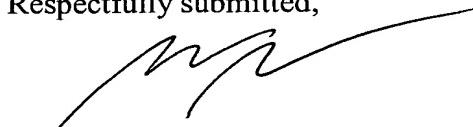
Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kashiwase in view of Frank and Hayabuchi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,558,287 (Hayabuchi). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Hayabuchi fails to overcome the deficiencies of Kashiwase and Frank as applied to claim 1. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:SMS/sxb

Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time  
Request for Continued Examination  
Information Disclosure Statement

Date: August 23, 2006

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